

generation to generation. This monotonous routine is common indeed to all purely agricultural communities, and everywhere tends to beget in the husbandman a settled phlegmatic habit of mind very different from the mobility, the alertness, the pliability of character which the hazards and uncertainties of commerce and the sea foster in the merchant and the sailor. The saturnine temperament of the farmer is as naturally averse to change as the more mercurial spirit of the trader and the seaman is predisposed to it. But the stereotyping of ideas and of customs was carried further in Egypt than in most lands devoted to husbandry by reason of the greater uniformity of the Egyptian seasons and the more complete isolation of the country.

The old The general effect of these causes was to create a type

Osiris ^ ° ^ " nat*ona ^ character which presented many points of re-better semblance to that of the Chinese. In both we see the same strength of will, the same astonishing industry, the

of Adonis same strange blend of humanity and savagery, the same . tus. obstinate adherence to tradition, the same pride of race and of ancient civilization, the same contempt for foreigners as for upstarts and barbarians, the same patient outward submission to an alien rule combined with an unshakable inward devotion to native ideals. It was this conservative

temper of the people, bred in great measure of the physical nature of their land, which, so to say, embalmed the memory of Osiris long after the corresponding figures of Adonis and Attis had suffered decay. For while

Egypt enjoyed
profound repose, the tides of war and
conquest, of traffic
and commerce, had for centuries rolled over
Western Asia,
the native home of Adonis and Attis ; and
if the shock
of nationalities in this great meeting-
ground of East and
West was favourable to the rise of new
faiths and new
moralities, it was in the same measure
unfavourable to the
preservation of the old.